ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

[0054]   Customer virtual local area networks (C-VLANs) connecting

multiple LAN segments are set up through a provider network (12). Provider

edge bridges (PEs) are coupled to customer edge bridges (CEs) to provide a

5   transparent link between LAN segments. To determine whether a backdoor link

is used in the C-VLAN topology, PEs monitor MAC address from a

predetermined time after a TCN is received to determine if there are

contradictory addresses or new addresses relative to the existing MAC address

tables (or forwarding databases) that are indicative of a backdoor link. If so, an

10   unlearning message is sent to bridges in the provider domain. In another

embodiment, CEs set a snoop bit to indicate which TCNs must be snooped.